

Wine Club: it's not enough to copy it, you need to design it well (and with patience)

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In Italy, the Wine Club remains an untapped opportunity. Success requires more than copying existing models; it demands a customized, long-term strategy. Wineries must define clear goals, manage expectations, and focus on loyalty and exclusivity rather than quick sales. Starting small with existing loyal customers is the key to sustainable growth.

The Wine Club in Italy today is where exports were twenty years ago: fascinating, full of potential... But for many, it's still unknown territory. The difference is that today we have an advantage: we can learn from others and do it better. **Because copying a model isn't enough; you need to design a customized one, starting from a fundamental question:**

“Why should I join your Wine Club?”

There isn't just one model, but there is one that's right for you

A Wine Club can be free or paid, open or by invitation, based on fixed shipments or exclusive benefits. **There is no one-size-fits-all recipe, but there are questions every winery must ask itself:**

- How many members can I realistically manage?
- What do I have to offer today (not in 6 months)?
- What is my goal: sales, loyalty, or branding?

Understanding your starting point helps avoid the risk of launching too fast and... burning out quickly.

The biggest enemy? Wrong expectations

The Wine Club is a marathon, not a sprint. No one builds a solid channel in 2-3 months. It takes time to acquire members, test offers, and refine logistics and communication. The data proves it: Italian Wine Clubs with over 1000 members are few, but they have all been around for years.

Those who join your Wine Club aren't just looking for wine; they seek relationships, status, and exclusivity. They want to feel part of something special. **That's why small gestures, like an invitation to a private event or a limited-edition box, matter immensely.** Anything that creates a different, unique, memorable experience is gold.

Customers are not all the same

Americans or Australians are already “used to” Wine Clubs. They know how they work and join willingly. **The Italian customer needs to be educated, guided, and motivated with clear content and a simple but solid proposal.** You don't need

to convince them with grand speeches; you need to let them experience concrete value.

If you are thinking about launching your Wine Club, start with the people who already love you. Those 10-15 loyal customers who buy from you every year, who speak well of you, who visit the winery often. **They are your first core group.** If it works with them, it will work with others.

Key points

1. **A Wine Club must be custom-designed** based on specific goals, not copied.
2. **Success is a marathon**, requiring patience and a long-term vision.
3. **Members seek exclusivity and relationships**, not just wine.
4. **Define clear goals:** Are you prioritizing sales, loyalty, or branding?
5. **Start by engaging your most loyal, existing customers first.**